
security officials, thus ensuring its return to the rightful owner, and curbing theft activities.

Other applications of the technique include the generation of fingerprint profiles for alluvial gold grains which provide geologists with information important for gold exploration activities, and the fingerprinting of platinum group metals also for provenance studies.

Recently, the fingerprinting of gold and tin artefacts from Southern African archaeological excavation sites is being used to aid in the determination of their origin, to gain more knowledge of early mining practices in this region and to identify the trade routes which existed between the various major centres. Some examples of this type of usage will be given in a later article to be published in *Gold Bulletin* (5).

In fact, the AARL technology has been diversified over a wide range of materials, and therefore has far-reaching implications in a variety of fields, for example in the fingerprinting of other precious metals (platinum, palladium, rhodium, iridium), ivory, rhino horn, copper and crude oils, to name but a few.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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CALENDAR

IPMI Conferences

The 22nd IPMI Conference will take place on June 14 - 17 1998 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The Technical Programme consists of sessions on 'Separation and Analysis', including a paper on XRF determination of gold in jewellery alloys and solvent extraction of gold cyanide; 'Finance and Economics of Precious Metals'; 'Gold', including a number of papers on gold supply, demand and production; 'Environmental Health and Safety'; 'Catalysis and Technology', including a paper on new advances in gold catalysis; and an 'Environmental Interactive Forum'.

The 23rd IPMI Conference will be held on June 20 - 23 1999 in Acapulco, Mexico.

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4th Eurométaux Conference

The fourth European Precious Metals Conference, sponsored by the European Precious Metals Industry, will take place in Barcelona on the 29 - 31 March 2000.

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